

Message Text

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43

ACTION OPR-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 INRE-00

USSS-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

ACDA-19 IO-14 SCS-03 SCA-01 A-01 SY-10 FS-01 DRC-01

OC-06 /156 W

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1361

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ATHENS NIACT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 11245

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AMER

SUBJECT: ITALIAN ASSISTANCE RE STRANDED TOURISTS IN EGYPT; ITALIAN
CONCERN RE PROTECTION OF U.S. INTERESTS IN SYRIA

DEPT PASS USINT CAIRO IMMEDIATE

REF: A) STATE 204564; B) ATHENS 7173; C) ROME 11195 D) ROME 11138

1. ON OCTOBER 16 WE PASSED INFORMATION CONTAINED REFS A AND B TO RESPONSIBLE ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL. OFFICIAL SAID HE WOULD INFORM ITALIAN EMBASSY DAMASCUS OF SUBSTITUTION OF "KNOSSOS" AND "ADONIS". IN LIGHT OF NATURE OF SYRIAN RESPONSE TO ITALIAN APPROACH FOR ASSURANCES FOR "ADONIS" (REF C), SOURCE SAID HE DID NOT RPT NOT EXPECT FURTHER REPLY FROM ITALIAN EMBASSY DAMASCUS ON THIS SUBJECT. SOURCE REITERATED ITALIAN VIEW THAT SINCE GREEK-FLAG SHIP INVOLVED, GREEK GOVERNMENT SHOULD IN FIRST INSTANCE BE CARRYING THE BALL ON THIS MATTER. HE SAID THAT ITALIAN AMBASSADOR IN DAMASCUS HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH GREEK EMBASSY THERE ON SUBJECT.

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2. OFFICIAL TOOK OCCASION TO REPEAT ITALIAN AMBASSADOR'S CONCERN THAT IT MAY BE INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO CARRY OUT PROTECTION OF U.S. INTERESTS FUNCTION BECAUSE OF PHYSICAL SITUATION IN CITY AND INCREASED ANTI-U.S. ATMOSPHERE (REF D). HE NOTED PRESS REPORTS THAT AMERICAN CITIZENS WERE FIGHTING WITH ISRAELI FORCES AS VOLUNTEERS AND SAID THAT IT WOULD BE PARTICULARLY STICKY IF SYRIAN CAPTURED ANY OF THESE REPORTED VOLUNTEERS, AND U.S. ASKED ITALIANS TO TAKE PROTECTIVE ACTION IN THEIR BEHALF. OFFICIAL ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HE WAS HYPOTHESIZING, BUT AT SAME TIME SAID HE COULD ENVISAGE SUCH A SITUATION. HE ASKED WHETHER SERVICE BY U.S. CITIZENS IN FOREIGN ARMED FORCES WAS AUTOMATIC ACT OF EXPATRIATION, AND, IF SO, THIS COULD SOLVE PROBLEM OF POSSIBLE CAPTURE OF U.S. VOLUNTEERS AS FAR AS PROTECTION SERVICES WERE CONCERNED.

3. WE REVIEWED SEVERAL U.S. OFFICIAL STATEMENTS DENYING ANY INVOLVEMENT IN MID-EAST FIGHTING BY U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL, AND INFORMED OFFICIAL THAT U.S. DISCOURAGED VOLUNTEERS FROM SERVING IN FOREIGN ARMED FORCES. WE INFORMED OFFICIAL, HOWEVER, THAT U.S. COURTS HAD RULED THAT SUCH SERVICE WAS NO LONGER CAUSE FOR AUTOMATIC EXPATRIATION. WE TOLD OFFICIAL WE WOULD REPORT HIS APPREHENSIONS ON MATTER TO THE DEPARTMENT. VOLPE

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED CAIRO.

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